

# **Georgia**<sup>®</sup> Department of **Community Affairs**

June 2015

## **33 years of service: DCA Deputy Commissioner Brian Williamson retires**



Instrumental in so many groundbreaking economic development initiatives and projects over the past 33 years in the state of Georgia, Brian Williamson retired as DCA's Deputy Commissioner of Community & Economic Development Finance at the end of June.

Brian came to the Department of Community Affairs in November of 1982 after a stint with the Middle Flint Area Planning and Development Commission. Since then he has served faithfully under five different DCA Commissioners -- Jim Higdon, Laura Meadows, Mike Beatty, Gretchen Corbin,

## NEWS AND EVENTS

## **DCA Board Member Carolyn Crayton Honored by Japan**

*Founder of Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful Commission  
 and Macon's International Cherry Blossom Festival*



**Left:** Carolyn Crayton with DCA Chief Operating Officer Brian Dill

**Right:** Mrs. Crayton with Consul General Kazuo Sunaga of Japan

DCA celebrated with its Board of Directors member Carolyn Crayton, who is the founder of Macon's International Cherry Blossom Festival and of the Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful Commission, when she was honored by the government of Japan for promoting cultural exchanges through cherry blossom preservation. Japanese Consul General Kazuo Sunaga conferred the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold

and now Camila Knowles. Each one had great things to say about Brian prior to the Georgia Economic Developers Association (GEDA) meeting in May at Callaway Gardens where he was honored by his peers.

Higdon said of him, "I hired Brian when he was just a young puppy, and he worked and grew with the job. He was always very professional and a hard worker and represented the agency well. During his time at DCA, Brian made a lot of friends around the state, and he is well respected around Georgia."

"I can't think of anyone in state government over the last 30 years who has done more to help build Georgia communities and facilitate job creation than Brian Williamson. He loves to get the deal done. He's creative and industrious, yet he always keeps an eye on protecting the Georgia taxpayer," said Laura Meadows.

Mike Beatty added, "I believe the essence of leadership is influence. Brian Williamson has influenced the communities of Georgia in a positive direction for several decades. Brian and I worked together for 10-plus years. During that time I saw a selfless leader work tirelessly to create a climate of success for Georgia's families and businesses."

"Brian is one of the most humble, hard-working, get-it-done state employees who treats everyone, from community volunteer to legislator, with the same exceptional level of customer service. It has been an honor to work with him as a state partner for many years and while at DCA," added Gretchen Corbin.

In her speech to recognize Brian during the May GEDA meeting, current DCA Commissioner Camila Knowles, pictured center above, noted, "Brian Williamson has stood guard over our federal Community Development Block Grant dollars, and he has stood up to the federal government on behalf of our state and on behalf of DCA to say that we know the best and most

and Silver Rays to Mrs. Crayton at a ceremony at his residence in Atlanta June 24.

DCA Chief Operating Officer Brian Dill addressed the ceremony guests by highlighting her service to DCA since 2007. Because of Mrs. Crayton's vision, Keep Georgia Beautiful, a DCA-sponsored program, is not only the nation's first affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, but it is also the largest - with 78 communities making the commitment to promote community pride through litter education, recycling, and beautification programs. Mrs. Crayton's own city is one of the most successful of the state's affiliates through its own Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful Commission.

Macon-Bibb's pride in its community is also reflected in the month-long, world-famous, and award-winning International Cherry Blossom Festival. It has been held every year since the spring of 1982. But the dream began with the first planting of 500 Yoshino Cherry trees in 1973 -- a project organized by Mrs. Crayton and her friend and donor William Fickling. Five hundred trees have now multiplied to over 300,000 in the city of Macon. And Macon is now known as the "Cherry Blossom Capital of the World" - all due to the passion and forethought of Carolyn Crayton.

Of her service to DCA, Brian Dill said in his address at the ceremony, "I trust that she means it when she says that she loves and believes in the work that DCA does for the State of Georgia. Mrs. Crayton has told us that it is a joy for her to serve on our board. And I think that is because she is truly a champion for Georgia's communities, its businesses and industries, and its families."

### ***Congratulations, Mrs. Crayton!***



***[Click here](#) to see highlights from the ceremony honoring Carolyn Crayton in this news story from Macon's WMAZ-Channel 13.***

effective way to use this money on behalf of Georgia's communities."

Knowles continued, "It is attention to detail like this that distinguishes Brian and has allowed Georgia to distinguish itself in terms of the work we do in community and economic development."

A few of the wins for the State of Georgia that Brian has been involved with in his 33 years are:

- the creation of the OneGeorgia Authority
- securing KIA, Caterpillar, and Baxter, which has translated into thousands of new jobs in Georgia
- implementing the job tax credit program
- administering the Community Development Block Grant program
- developing public-private partnerships like the Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund

Brian Williamson has been an integral player in creating national policy as a long-serving member of the COSDA Board of Directors. He has also served as an advocate for people with no place to call home through the Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless Board of Directors.

"At the end of the day, Brian is a wealth of knowledge, he is a steel trap for details, and he is a keeper of history. He will be so missed at DCA. Thank you, Brian, for your many great years of service to DCA and to our state," concluded Knowles.

***Congratulations to Brian Williamson on his well-deserved retirement!***

## Destiny Industries Hosts DCA's Industrialized Buildings Advisory Committee



**Front (left to right):** Jerry Hopkins (CCSi), Dee Leclair (DCA Staff), and Hiller Spann (Alliances Homes, Inc.)

**Back (left to right):** Jerry Brooks (General Manager, Destiny), RC Connell (DCA Staff), Commissioner Walter Gibson, Tyler Martin (DCA Staff), Doug Lightsey (Ice House America), Mayor Jimmy Burnette (Suwanee, GA), Bill Towson (DCA Staff), Bob Johnson (EMC), Jerry Benton (Plant Engineer, Destiny), Carl Fortson (Director of Code Enforcement, Tift County), Ted Miltiades (DCA Director of Industrialized Buildings Program), and Bob Qurnell (EVP, Destiny)

Destiny Industries, LLC hosted a meeting of DCA's Industrialized Buildings Advisory Committee (IBAC) on May 7 at their manufacturing facilities located in Moultrie. EVP Bob Qurnell and General Manager Jerry Brooks guided IBAC members, DCA staff and guests on a tour of the plant followed by a luncheon at one of their fully-constructed homes. The home shown, the Olive House, had a one and one-half story Cape Code floor plan with 1930 sq. ft. of living space.

Destiny Industries, LLC has been an active manufacturer in the Georgia IB Program since 2007. Their plant in Moultrie has approximately 200,000 sq. ft. of conditioned manufacturing space across three facilities totaling 94 acres. Currently employing approximately 167 local employees, Destiny is a wholesale producer of premium quality, conventional homes built with systems technology that are marketed through a regional modular network of builders or developers.

For questions about GA's Industrialized Buildings Program, please visit [www.dca.ga.gov](http://www.dca.ga.gov) or contact the Department of Community Affairs at 404-679-3118 or by email at [industrializedbuildings@dca.ga.gov](mailto:industrializedbuildings@dca.ga.gov).



## DCA's State Small Business Credit Initiatives Program honored by national finance council



*Pictured, left to right, with their award are DCA Economic Development Finance staffers Senior Credit Underwriter Ross Avina, SSBCI Program Specialist Timothy Smith, Division Director Joanie Perry, SSBCI Program Manager Holly Hunt, DCA Board member Al Hodge, Loan Analyst Kathy Darville, and Credit Manager John Kingrey*

The Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) announced the winners of the 2015 CDFA Georgia Financing Roundtable Excellence Awards. DCA's State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) was recognized with the Program Excellence Award on June 4.

"Each year CDFA is proud to honor excellence in development finance. The work of our award winners is cutting-edge, innovative, and an example of best practices in our industry," said Toby Rittner, CDFA President & CEO.

The CDFA Georgia Financing Roundtable Excellence Awards recognize outstanding development finance programs, agencies, leaders and projects in the use of financing tools for economic development, as well as the individuals who champion those efforts.

## DCA Toastmasters Club Earns Highest Award



DCA Toastmasters Club is celebrating after receiving the highest award available to Toastmasters Clubs - the *President's Distinguished Award*.

The club offers a platform for members to improve communication and leadership skills. Members attend bi-monthly meetings where they deliver speeches and serve in meeting roles outlined in the Toastmasters International curriculum.

Within Toastmasters International, clubs are challenged to maintain consistent membership and meet ten goals based on the educational achievements and participation of its club members. Clubs that achieve at least nine of the ten goals receive the highest award, President's Distinguished.

DCA's Toastmasters Club President Christy Barnes shared the news with her fellow members recently. "Our goal is to always push ourselves to make DCA Toastmasters Club the best club there is," Barnes stated. "The President's Distinguished Award is the result of our commitment to this mission and the collective hard work of all our members."

The club meets every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at noon at the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, 60 Executive Park South, NE, in Atlanta. DCA welcomes new members, and all meetings are open to the public.

"Everyone should attend a Toastmasters meeting," Barnes recommends. "No matter where you are on the spectrum of public speaking and leadership, there is always room for improvement."

For more information, contact Christy Barnes at [christy.barnes@dca.ga.gov](mailto:christy.barnes@dca.ga.gov) or Lynnae Thandiwe at [lynnae.thandiwe@dca.ga.gov](mailto:lynnae.thandiwe@dca.ga.gov).

Georgia's SSBCI offers four programs: Loan Participation, Funding for CDFIs, Small Business Credit Guarantee, and Capital Access. CDFA officials noted that DCA has done an exceptional job of engaging stakeholders in an effort to tailor programs specific to the state's primary business needs. The program is nationally recognized for its success in funding CDFI's, as DCA has made the largest dollar amounts of loans or investments through CDFIs of any other state, amounting to \$72 million in 2013.



## Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation reports record-breaking year in making communities cleaner

There are many impressive statistics to share from the DCA-sponsored Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation's most recent report from FY '14. As the largest affiliate network in the nation, what Georgia's 78 Keep America Beautiful affiliates are doing across the state is working and making a difference in litter reduction, recycling and general beautification.

**In 2014-15, Keep Georgia Beautiful affiliates:**

## Georgia Main Street Program Celebrates National Historic Preservation Month



The Georgia Main Street Program wrapped up National Historic Preservation Month in May with a presentation and brunch at the Historic Hay House in Macon. A big thanks to presenter Josh Rogers from NewTown Macon and to our dedicated and fabulous partners at the Hay House, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, for hosting us!

## UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

### HomeSafe Georgia events in July

**HomeSafe**  
Georgia®

Free  
Mortgage  
Payment  
Assistance

#### Events for July 2015:

Savannah Area Hurricane Preparedness Expo, July 11; 9 AM - 1 PM;  
The Home Depot, 1901 E. Victory Drive, Savannah

**ENGAGED** more than 220,000 volunteers  
**RECYCLED** 32 million lbs. of material  
**REUSED** 118,000 Christmas trees as mulch and habitat  
**PLANTED** 114 edible gardens and more than 9,100 trees  
**ELIMINATED** 218 illegal dump sites  
**REMOVED** 2.5 million lbs. of litter  
**DELIVERED** \$41.9 million in volunteer action

For every \$1 invested by state government, the Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation worked through its affiliate network to return \$660.27 in benefits to the state. Georgia currently has the second largest infrastructure for recycling manufacturing in the U.S. To date, 130 Georgia businesses rely on recycled materials for their products.



## GET to KNOW DCA

*June Topic of the Month*

**OneGeorgia Equity  
Program Notice of Funding  
Availability (NOFA):**

*Applications due by July 8*

The OneGeorgia Authority hereby notifies interested applicants of the availability of

2015 CareerFest/Job Fair, July 16; 10 AM - 2 PM; Norcross First United Methodist Church, 2500 Beaver Run Road, Norcross

North Georgia Job Fair, July 25; 10 AM - 2 PM; Free Chapel, 3001 McEver Road, Gainesville

### **About HomeSafe Georgia:**

***It is a free, state government program to help homeowners who are unemployed, underemployed or face other types of financial hardships save their homes from foreclosure. There is no cost to apply and no fee if approved.***

A homeowner who has experienced a financial hardship within the last 36 months -- such as hardship associated with loss of a job, military service, death of a spouse, or medical problems -- may be eligible for HomeSafe Georgia assistance. We encourage potential eligible homeowners to attend one of the events listed above.

Churches, clubs and community organizations are encouraged to inform others about the above events and to help those without Internet access to apply for these funds. For more information, please visit [www.HomeSafeGeorgia.com](http://www.HomeSafeGeorgia.com).



***Take a look at this story from WTOG Channel 11 in Savannah featuring DCA Deputy Commissioner of Housing Carmen Chubb and a homeowner who avoided foreclosure through HomeSafe Georgia.***

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

### **May Financial Awards**

#### **Region 1: Walker County**

- \$200,000 in REBA funds to assist the Walker County Development Authority
- The Audia Plastics Georgia, LLC, plant that will manufacture and distribute compounded polyolefins.
- Will create 100 new jobs and invest \$52.7 million within 60 months of the start of operations. Total estimated project cost is \$63.7 million.

funds in the Equity Program in the form of grants, loans and any other forms of assistance authorized by (O.C.G.A. 50-34-1 et seq.). The Equity Fund is designed as a flexible community and economic development tool which provides funding for projects relating to public water and sewer infrastructure; road, rail and airport improvements; capacity building for industrial/business sites; workforce and tourism.

Applications under the OneGeorgia Authority Equity Fund NOFA were accepted beginning on May 1, 2015. Applications must arrive at DCA by 4:00 PM on July 8, 2015. No applications for this round will be accepted after this date and time.

This Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is issued by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as the administrator of the programs of the OneGeorgia Authority. For more information on Equity fund regulations, follow the link to [www.onegeorgia.org](http://www.onegeorgia.org).

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### Region 3: Clayton County

- \$480,000 in REBA funds to assist the Development Authority of Clayton County
- Chime Solutions, Inc., a new call center, will create 1,120 new jobs.
- The company will invest approximately \$4,600,000 within 60 months of the start of operations. Total estimated project cost is \$5,080,000.

### Region 11: Brooks County

- \$425,500 EIP grant for a \$400,000 loan to benefit Elec-Tec Inc. (ELI).
- The EIP loan will be used to finance land and building acquisition for the property located in Brooks County.
- This project is expected to create 40 net new full-time jobs. One hundred percent of the created jobs will be presumed to be held by low- and moderate-income persons.





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